

Executive Summary

We are connected by water. Washington State’s coastal areas—from the Pacific Ocean into the Salish Sea, stretching across the Strait of Juan de Fuca and throughout Puget Sound—have been defined by their relationship to saltwater, connected by a shared maritime heritage. Since time immemorial, water and maritime culture have shaped this place and its people, contributing greatly to the development of the region and, in more recent centuries, the nation. Today, maritime heritage remains a vibrant part of Washington’s communities. The designation of the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area along our state’s saltwater shorelines recognizes the importance of Washington’s maritime heritage to our local, regional, and national story.

WHAT IS THE MARITIME WASHINGTON NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA?

National Heritage Areas are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a nationally important landscape. National Heritage Areas build public-private partnerships to better tell the stories of these places and support communities in maintaining and sharing their unique resources. Although supported by the National Park Service, National Heritage Areas are unique in that they are locally run and completely non-regulatory. There is no change in ownership of land, no added rules or regulations, and participation is completely voluntary.



In 2019, the **Maritime Washington National Heritage Area** was designated by Congress to help **share and preserve our state’s unique maritime heritage resources and stories.** Its purpose is to support those who celebrate, maintain, and share our water-based experiences, to strengthen partnerships and increase collaboration, and to enhance the way residents and visitors alike think about and experience our maritime heritage.

Maritime Washington includes 3,000 miles of Washington State’s saltwater coastline from Grays Harbor County to the Canadian border, extending one-quarter mile inland from the mean high tide line. Its boundaries include the coastal lands of 18 federally recognized Tribes, 13 counties, 32 incorporated cities, and 33 port districts.

WHAT IS THE MANAGEMENT PLAN, AND HOW WAS IT CREATED?

The Management Plan outlines the goals, strategies, policies, and plans for the future of the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area. It is the “navigation plan,” outlining what this new program will look like, what it will do, and how it will do it. The plan will serve as a useful and living document to guide staff, leadership, and partners in working together to launch this new National Heritage Area. The Management Plan includes seven chapters:

- **Chapter One: Introduction:** Provides background on the purpose of Maritime Washington and creation of this Management Plan.
- **Chapter Two: Grounding:** Includes geographic, demographic, and historical overviews of the Maritime Washington region.
- **Chapter Three: Directional Guidance:** Outlines the mission and goals of the heritage area, as well as its key functions and partnership structures.
- **Chapter Four: Interpretive Plan:** Presents a framework for interpreting and sharing the narratives and resources of the area, including themes, key sites, and strategies for sharing and amplifying stories.
- **Chapter Five: Branding and Marketing Plan:** Includes the brand identity of the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area and outlines communication tactics.
- **Chapter Six: Business Plan:** Describes the organizational structures, policies, and strategies for governing, staffing, managing, and funding the heritage area.
- **Chapter Seven: Implementation Plan:** Identifies short- and long-range actions and performance goals for the heritage area, as well as guiding principles for implementation.
- **Appendices,** including this executive summary of this Management Plan, a copy of Maritime Washington’s enabling legislation, additional information on key sites, a resource inventory, a detailed overview of the management planning process, tables summarizing implementation actions, an overview of completed projects to date, and letters of support.

The plan took shape through a highly collaborative process over the course of

three years. Planning efforts were led by a Steering Committee, representing diverse perspectives and interests from across the region, alongside five working groups, including a Tribal Working Group. Members of the public contributed to this vision through surveys, mapping activities, individual interviews, and 15 public workshops, focus groups, and summits.

Now, the community is continuing to refine the course ahead for Maritime Washington by reviewing and providing input on the draft of the Management Plan.

WHAT WILL MARITIME WASHINGTON DO?

Vision: Maritime Washington envisions a future in which

- Maritime partners are stronger through increased organizational sustainability, more funding opportunities, stronger cross-sector and cross-regional relationships, broadened networks for sharing ideas and solutions, and increased support for leaders and practitioners.
- Maritime heritage in Washington celebrates and reflects the diverse people, communities, and cultures within it—past, present, and future.
- Residents and visitors alike are more connected to Washington’s saltwater shores and waterways through interpretation, physical access, and a strong sense of place/identity.

Mission: The Maritime Washington National Heritage Area supports a network that strengthens the maritime community and connects people with the stories, experiences, sites, and cultures of our state’s saltwater shores and waterways.

Key functions: Partner support, external messaging, and advocacy

Partnership structure: Collaboration with and amongst partners will be critical to the success of Maritime Washington. All National Heritage Areas are based on the idea of partnership: bringing together a range of Tribes, organizations, businesses, industries, and governments to better protect and share heritage resources and stories. One of the great strengths of Maritime Washington is the incredible quality and quantity of potential partners who contribute to our state’s maritime heritage and culture.

Maritime Washington will rally these groups to create a robust cross-sector network that strengthens all who participate in it, through networking, knowledge sharing, trainings, resources, and other support for leaders and practitioners. Any organization (private or public, for-profit or nonprofit) or Tribe whose work is aligned with the Maritime Washington mission may choose to become a partner of the Maritime Washington network.

INTERPRETATION

Taken together, the combination of compelling narratives, intangible cultural practices, physical resources, and effective storytellers provide those experiencing Maritime Washington with unparalleled opportunities to connect with the stories of this place. To help organize the presentation of these stories, Maritime Washington has developed **eight interpretive themes**, which will provide the heritage area and its partners with a helpful framework through which to highlight the region's many and diverse maritime stories, sites, and resources.

1. Canoe cultures
2. Voyages of exploration
3. Trade and working waterfronts
4. Water highways
5. Securing our shores
6. Natural resources and human impacts
7. Communities shaped by water
8. Water and recreation

The key interpretive function of the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area will be to act as an amplifier and supporter of community-based storytellers. Maritime Washington does not aim to duplicate these efforts, nor does it wish to tell any community's stories for them. Instead, the heritage area will strive to elevate the stories being told and opportunities offered by our partners, helping them reach wider audiences.

BRANDING AND MARKETING

The Maritime Washington brand represents the heritage area as a program, as well as the region as a whole. It reflects:

- Our shorelines' diverse personalities, from **calming, peaceful, and meditative to restless, rugged, and dramatic.**
- **The vibrant cultures of our saltwater shores,** which make us unlike all other places.
- Our promise to **deepen connection** between people, organizations, and maritime heritage.

For Maritime Washington to best serve those who live, work, and play within the heritage area, our community needs to know who we are, what we do, and what we hope to achieve together. Early communication efforts will focus on existing and potential partners and then grow to include residents and, later, visitors to the area.



**MARITIME
WASHINGTON**
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA
Shaped by Sea & Story

BUSINESS STRUCTURE

National Heritage Areas are supported by the National Park Service but are managed locally. The local coordinating entity for Maritime Washington is the statewide nonprofit Washington Trust for Historic Preservation.

Moving forward, Maritime Washington will be guided by the Washington Trust Board of Directors, a Maritime Washington Advisory Board, and a Maritime Washington Tribal Working Group. The implementation of Maritime Washington programming and operations will be supported by a minimum of two full-time staff.

Anticipated expenses

- Administration and staffing
- Programming
- Marketing
- Subgranting

Anticipated revenue streams

- Federal funding via the National Park Service/Heritage Partnership Program
- Washington State
- Grants from public and private funders
- Sponsorship
- Partnership
- Individual donors
- Earned revenue (e.g., events, activities, merchandise)
- In-kind match from partners, grantees, and volunteers



Image: 2017 Wooden Boat Festival, Port Townsend, E.T. Becker

IMPLEMENTATION

The Management Plan presents an implementation framework that will guide the heritage area’s actions over the next 10 to 15 years. It is organized around five goals, each of which is supported by several strategies (identified as “objectives”), which are in turn broken down into specific implementation actions to be taken by Maritime Washington and its partners.

Figure: Implementation goals and objectives summary

GOAL		SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES	LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES
Build a network	Build a network of cross-sector partners dedicated to advancing and honoring Washington’s maritime cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit partners Support capacity building through the sharing of best practices Facilitate communications and relationship-building among partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build the network and provide new value to partners through enhanced programming
Provide support and resources	Provide support and resources for organizations, communities, and Tribes working to preserve, enhance, and share maritime heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and execute an annual grant program Connect partners with additional funding opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the size of the grant program Explore new subgranting models
Share diverse stories	Share diverse stories and increase visibility of Washington’s maritime heritage, past and present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and maintain a website that centralizes maritime sites and stories Create and maintain additional channels to promote maritime sites and stories Collaborate with partners and community members on new maritime storytelling projects Elevate maritime stories in public spaces Help partners tie their sites and stories into broader maritime narratives of Washington State 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number and depth of collaborative storytelling partnerships Continue partnerships to expand maritime interpretation in public spaces
Encourage sustainable experiences	Encourage residents and visitors to responsibly and sustainably experience Washington’s maritime heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralize information about what to do in the heritage area Promote awareness of and engagement with the Maritime Washington region and the sites and experiences within it Promote responsible tourism and visitation practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand messaging to new audiences Explore partner-based signage programs
Preserve the region’s maritime identity	Preserve Washington State’s unique maritime identity, resources, and lifeways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for policies and actions that encourage protection of natural, historical, and cultural maritime resources Support projects that preserve and increase access to historic maritime sites and stories Increase awareness of modern maritime careers and trades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider new ways to provide preservation support Investigate the creation of a scholarship program for maritime careers